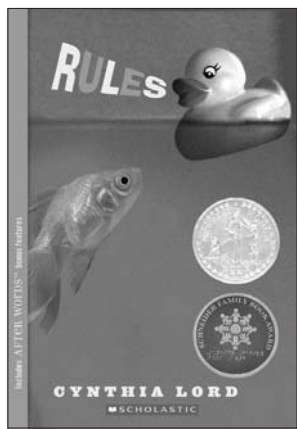


Rules



**GUIDED
READING
PROGRAM**
Fiction Focus
2nd Edition

Summary & Standard

Twelve-year-old Catherine deals with her brother's autism by teaching him rules to follow. She begins to evaluate her own rules for living, however, after befriendng her new neighbor and a boy she meets at her brother's therapy clinic. Students will accurately identify the theme or author's message in a grade-level-appropriate text.

Author: Cynthia Lord
Genre: Realistic Fiction

Word Count: 250+
Theme/Idea: understanding ways people communicate

Making Connections: Text to Self

Students may not know anyone with autism. Explain that autism is a condition that causes difficulty in interactions with others. Some people with autism have difficulty communicating. Ask: *What is communication? Why is it important?*

Extend the connection by having students name different ways to communicate. Encourage them to include nonverbal types, such as facial expressions, actions, and pointing. Ask: *When might you use nonverbal communication? How could you get an idea across without speaking?*

For additional teaching ideas and resources about autism, see <http://www.autismsource.org/>.

Vocabulary

Essential Words: communication, conversation, occupational, therapy

Related Words for Discussion: connection, interaction, nonverbal, relationship, verbal

Genre

Realistic Fiction Realistic fiction is a made-up story that features characters who are like real people and situations that could really happen.

ELL Bridge

To prepare students for reading, preview some content-related words such as *autism*, *clinic*, *communication*, *appointment*, and *therapy*. Demonstrate using a dictionary. Help students pronounce each word and say its meaning. Have them copy the words and definitions on a piece of paper, then write and read sentences using several of the words together. Encourage them to keep their word list handy while reading so they can add words to look up later.

Supportive Book Features

Text The story is divided into chapters, each relating to one of David's rules and titled accordingly. Catherine's voice uses informal language and is easy to read.

Vocabulary Students should be able to define any unfamiliar terms by using context.

Praise students for specific use of "Behaviors to Notice and Support" on page 97 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

Challenging Book Features

Text Students may have difficulty reading sections in which the author uses creative punctuation and capitalization, such as when Jason's therapist talks to him loudly and slowly (page 23). Point out the special typefaces used to depict David's rules (page 4) or Jason's communication with his word cards (page 46).

Content While students will relate to many of Catherine's concerns, many will not have the experience of living with a brother with autism or befriendng someone with a disability. Discuss how reading about the experiences described in the book may help the reader understand challenges that others may face.



Teaching Options

Developing Comprehension

Thinking Within the Text

Have students trace how Catherine's relationships with Jason, Kristi, and David develop over the course of the book. Ask them to cite specific evidence from the text.

Thinking Beyond the Text

Remind students that one of Catherine's rules is *Some people think they know who you are, when really they don't*. Ask students what they think she means. Ask: *Do you agree with Catherine? Why or why not?* Point out that one important way people get to know who you are is through communication. Ask students how people can communicate to others who they really are.

Thinking About the Text

Ask students to identify different methods the author uses to convey how people (and guinea pigs) communicate in this book. For example, Catherine's thoughts and the thoughts she imagines her guinea pigs have are in italics, and Jason's dialogue is set in a different font and conveyed through different combinations of card text. The things Jason's therapist says to him are set in parentheses and all caps to depict that she is shouting and gesturing.

Making Predictions

Explain to students that they can often predict what will happen next in a story by paying attention to foreshadowing, or clues the author gives about future events. For example, the reader may be able to guess how Jason feels about Catherine because he changes his shirt (page 67) and gets his hair cut (page 114). Ask students to identify other examples of foreshadowing in this book, such as Catherine's lying about inviting the neighbors to the cookout (page 65), foreshadowing the fact that she tries to hide David's problems from them.

For more prompts and ideas for teaching problem-solving strategies, see page 22 of the *Guided Reading Teacher's Guide*.

Developing Phonics and Word-Solving Strategies

Personification

Remind students that personification is a figure of speech that gives an idea or object the characteristics of a person.

- Point out that Catherine often personifies letters and words. For example, she says *'why not' is pushier—like 'why' with a fist on its hip* (page 76), and on page 158 she personifies each letter of the word *dance*.
- Ask students to identify other examples of personification as they read.

Developing Fluency

Model reading page 53, using punctuation for proper phrasing and emphasizing text within quotation marks. Then invite groups to take turns rereading the section aloud.

Oral Language/Conversation

Talk About Communication Point out that communication is one way human beings connect with each other. Have students discuss forms of communication mentioned in this book, such as Jason's communication book, flashlight Morse Code, jokes, sticky notes, music, rules, facial expressions, drawings, and giving gifts. List additional forms, such as sign language, books, and mass media.

Extending Meaning Through Writing

- Have students describe the top five words or phrases they would want in a "communication book" and explain why they chose these particular words and/or phrases. (**Expository**)
- Have students write a scene describing Catherine's and Kristi's next meeting that reveals where their friendship stands. (**Narrative**)

Other Books

Against the Odds by Joe Layden

Oh, Brother by Johnnie Marshall Wilson